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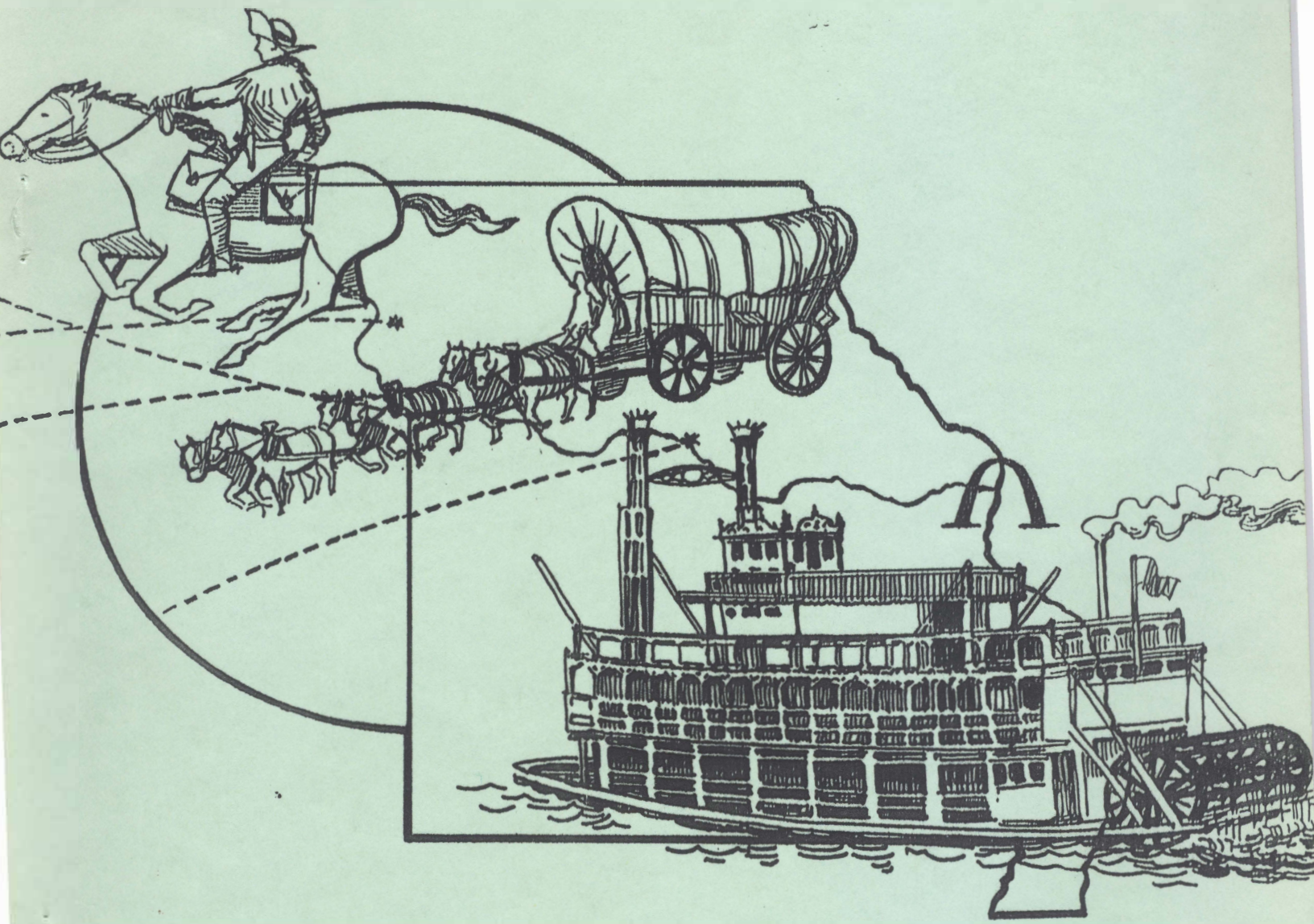

Toward the Setting Sun

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of

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From the Editor

This issue focuses first on the German-speaking work of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Our lead article was a retrospective of the work of the St. Louis German Conference, written for the last journal of that conference, when it merged with the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. German immigration was a significant factor in the development of Missouri, and it is good to have a reminder of the work done on behalf of Methodism among those immigrants. This annual conference developed and supported Central Wesleyan College at Warrenton, and the Orphan's Home, also at Warrenton, which continues in Epworth Children's Home in Webster Groves.

Wm. Schutz was one of the preachers in that German Conference, and his memoir was first published in the same journal of the conference.

Champion City United Methodist Church represents one of the congregations of German Methodism, still alive and going strong. Thomas Sullenger is the pastor at Champion City, and the author of this history, written for the anniversary of the church last year. We are grateful to Rev. Theodore Wolff, a part of our German heritage, a retired member of the Missouri East Annual Conference, and a Member Emeritus of the Missouri East Commission on Archives and History, for keeping the memory of the German work fresh in our minds, and for sharing with us

the Champion City history.

The Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was the founder of mission work among the Indians in Kansas and Oklahoma. William Johnson was one of the first missionaries to the Shawnee and Kansas Indians. His letters to the Secretary of the Missionary Board reflect something of the reality of life on the frontier. His comments on the Indians are all too dated, in terms of their clear indication of white superiority, but the deep commitment to them as people and to the cause of Jesus Christ, shines through his letters. It also seems strange to us to read the comment about being "ninety miles outside the United States", but Kansas was not a state in the 1830s, and represented "foreign" travel. In future issues, we plan to share letters from his brother, Thomas Johnson, and from Jerome C. Berryman, who was also an early missionary to the Indians. All these letters were first published in the Christian Advocate, and have been republished in various source books.

As always, we remain open to your suggestions and contributions.

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THE ST. LOUIS GERMAN CONFERENCE IN RETROSPECT

John Helmers

Some events are epochal. Such an event does not mark the beginning or completion of a notable movement but it unmistakably indicates that a change is under way or that a cycle is nearing its close. The ninth of September, 1925, timed such an event. On that memorable afternoon in the Eden Methodist Episcopal Church of St. Louis, Mo., the St. Louis German Conference voted to terminate its separate existence and merge with the seven contiguous conferences in whose boundaries the congregations of said conference were located.

The epoch now drawing to a close had its pronounced beginning when the Ohio Conference appointed William Nast to open up a mission among the Germans in Cincinnatti, Ohio, in 1835. Methodism had taken another step toward cosmopolitanism, had markedly drawn nearer the realization of the vision of its great founder expressed as: The world is my parish." That vision included every nation and every tongue.

A Methodist calendar must mark 1844 as another red letter date. It indicates the expansive curve of the cycle begun nine years previously. The German speaking missions of the Methodist Church, now the most numerous branch of Protestantism in the United States, had so abundantly justified their exis-

tence that they were permitted for more effective service sake to form separate districts, united with one of the existing conferences. This was a makeshift, a compromise, the best an over-cautious conservatism in the mother church could be induced to vote. The more daring leaders headed by that far-seeing Christian knight, William Nast, had asked for a separate conference. To understand the hesitancy of the brethren it must be remembered that 1844 is also the year of the secession of the Methodist Episcopal Church South due to irreconcilable views on the slavery question. The alarm created by this event produced caution lest the Germans, too, might mean independence instead of federation.

The year 1865 which witnessed political secession in its death throes, saw the realization of separate conferences for the German speaking part of the Methodist Church. Three conferences were organized: the Central German, the Northwestern German, and the Southwestern German. These conferences have proved their vitality and holy zeal for the Kingdom by the fact that these original three have grown in the course of time into thirteen conferences. Ten of these are located in the United States.

To these dates must be added that of 1925. This date of the merger is indicative of the fact that the cycle begun in 1835 with 1844 and 1864 marking its expanding area, is now nearing its completion. The task once heroically entered upon,

crowned with results beyond the fondest expectation of the founders, is not left in the lurch by the merger. It is the rather a frank and courageous acknowledgment that a specific work is finished. One epoch of heroic, consecrated endeavor closes, another calling for not a whit less of vicarious living and working has opened and the membership of the St. Louis German Conference with all the consecration which marked the lives of their fathers have entered upon the new and untried tomorrow to stamp it with the seal of the Kingdom of God.

German Methodism was first born in the hearts of the twice born Philip Otterbein and Jacob Albrecht. They fervently pled that the gospel be preached to the host of Germans in the German tongue. While their need of spiritual nurture and awakening was acknowledged yet our church had not as yet ears to hear. Bishop Asbury, that flaming evangel, evidently deemed the English language an all-sufficient vehicle of spiritual truth. Moreover there were so many other wide open doors inviting entrance where the message of redemption couched in the English language was sufficient. But the veto of the Methodist Church did not cause the holy vision to vanish from the minds of these men. Two independent movements sprang into being, the United Brethren who attained to five times the size of German Methodism in the United States, and the Evangelical Association with a membership of about fourteen thousand.

Some thirty years later the voice of the living God spoke

yet again to Methodism. By this time the great Church and learned and heeded. Her own occasional and spasmodic endeavors had been too meager, and the success of the United Brethren and the Evangelical Association was too good an object lesson to be overlooked. William Nast's appointment to the mission among the Germans in Cincinnatti marks the actual beginning of German Methodism, 1835. $100.00 was the amount the Board of Missions voted to invest in this venture. Lest this sum seem to pitifully small, let it be remembered that this was the uniform salary paid a single man at this time, while $200.00 was the compensation for a married man. In William Nast a providential leader for this movement was found. Here was a man possessed of a logical mind, a thorough education, a deep religious experience, and filled with a holy and unquenchable zeal. His leadership was intensified and enormously multiplied when a few years later he assumed the editorship of the Christliche Apologete. The first year's result of his work was too meager to satisfy the Board of Missions and Cincinnati had to be exchanged for a three hundred mile circuit centering about Columbus, Ohio, on which 25 preaching places were established. To meet these appointments when roads were primitive and when this particular circuit was totally innocent of the wiles of natural horse flesh, the metal of the German scholar was sorely tested. The work prospered and six years later it needed and possessed 22 active ministers who preached the gospel in the

German language.

The history of the St. Louis German Conference points to Ludwig S. Jacoby of Jewish descent as its human founder. Let the Dearborn Independent take due notice. Converted under William Nast he was sent in 1841 to St. Louis, Mo., where 15,000 Germans had such religious care as two small congregations and one tiny church could furnish. Here a new nucleus for the central west was established. The Salem Church, the first fruit of this indefatigable missionary, has been a veritable dynamo of spiritual power. This congregation, somewhat of an itinerant herself at present occupying her fifth home, has sent forth thirty-seven ministers from her fold. From St. Louis as a center the expansion of the work followed the courses of the Mississippi and her tributaries, west, east, and north, till the confines of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado were penetrated. The movement southward was quickly checked through the uncompromising attitude of the Germans toward slavery. In 1844 the General Conference granted permission to form three German Districts. This as indicated above was a compromise, a plan advocated by Peter Schmucker as against the formation of a German conference which had urgently been sought by the more daring of these Teutonic itinerants. The St. Louis District, the nucleus out of which in 1864 the Southwestern German Conference, and in 1878 the St. Louis German Conference was to develop, was one of the three formed,

headed by L.S. Jacoby as Presiding Elder. This district was intended to be a part of the Missouri Conference. The patriotism of the men who made up the leadership of German Methodism was put to the test at once. When Bishop Thomas Morris called for a viva voce vote for the Methodist Church "North" or "South" the thirteen German Methodist ministers voted for "the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States" though the Conference voted to go "South". The formation of the Methodist Church South disrupted the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church so completely for the time that the St. Louis German District became a part of the Illinois Conference. This district extended westward to Lexington, Mo., and northward to Galena, Ill., and Dubuque, Iowa. The appointments were as follows: Presiding Elder, L.S. Jacoby; North St. Louis, George Danker; South St. Louis, C. Jost; Hermann, C.H. Koeneke; Pinckney, F. Horstman; Versailles, Sebastian Barth and H. Nuelsen; Belleville, H. Hemminghaus and J. Steinhausen; Beardstown, D. Bristol; Quincy, Phil. Barth; Leadmines (Dubuque and Galena), W. Schreck; German Creek and Walnut Creek, Iowa, John Mann.

These men traveled three hundred mile circuits in the days when the bare rudiments only of roads existed, when rivers had to be forded and creeks were unbridged, when they were isolated to such an extent that on the Kansas appointment a brother did not see another brother minister from October until

the following April, when the presiding elder bade farewell to his family to make a seven week tour on horseback. These men dreamed dreams and had visions that encompassed not the American continent alone with all its vastness but continents. Did not this fragment of what was to be the St. Louis German Conference send the first missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church to Germany? Again the man selected as fit for the task was L.S. Jacoby who in 1849 laid the foundation for the work in Bremen. There in the Teutonic homeland German Methodism will not only have an abiding but an expanding work till the Great Bishop leads his Church into larger conceptions than denominational barriers permit today. Since that day this work has grown into three conferences. It is because of their holy zeal and consecration that so insignificant a beginning has grown into world dimensions.

When twenty-three years had come and gone the branch called German Methodism had 451 churches, 306 itinerant ministers, and 26,145 members to its credit. Extreme modesty in William Nast had expressed the wish that he might see one strong congregation of German Methodists, and God had honored the work of him and his co-laborers with such results. It was in this year (1864) that the fear of the English brethren that the formation of the German work into district conferences would be but a step toward eventual independence, when the fear of some of the German brethren that such action would alienate

the sympathy of the English speaking branch of the Church, that this double dread was overridden and three German conferences were formed: the Central German, the Northwestern, and the Southwestern German Conference. The last named was subdivided into five districts: the St. Louis, Belleville, Burlington, Quincy, and St. Joseph districts. This conference began with a membership of 5,276 and 87 ministers in full connection. When this conference met the city of St. Louis was under martial law due to Price's raid through Missouri. So on the very first page of the journal of the Southwestern German Conference we read: "The Provost Marshal came in and each member of the Conference and the delegates took the oath of allegiance to the government of the United States; which was heartily done." There still hovers something of the glow of the sacrament about these minutes. Over 3,000 German Methodists fought and died in the Civil War. Patriotism of a superior quality has always marked our membership. Read anew what these men, ministers and laymen, whose appointments or homes were located in the border state of Missouri suffered at the hands of raiders who in the name of the Confederacy carried on pillage, rape, and murder. The St. Louis German Conference of 10,000 members sent over 700 into the World War. At that rate German Methodism here contributed a total of nearly 5,000.

Steadily the growth of the Conference proceeded, older congregations grew stronger and new ones were being organized

until the division in 1878. Then the Southwestern German Conference gave way to the St. Louis German and the Western German Conference. Of the 11, 365 members, 8,244 went to the former and 2,811 fell to the lot of the latter. The St. Louis German Conference reached the peak of its numerical strength with 11, 543 members and 19,918 Sunday School scholars. That was early in the twentieth century. From that time on the forces which depleted were stronger than the forces which made for gain.

Our people have been quite liberal in their support of local projects as well as in benevolences. The sums total so contributed tell but a part of the story. Great wealth has seldom been found among us. For those blessed with the ability to accumulate wealth were never long in our midst. They transferred their membership to the larger and more opulent English churches where they and the younger members of their families found environment more in keeping with their standard of living. This German Methodism, some 64,000 of them, contributed in 1919 about $470,000 toward the various benevolences, and $500,000 to the local budget. That is nearly $16.00 per capita in annual giving for church support.

Take note of the following item on this historical balance sheet. Of forty-one authors enumerated as a product of German Methodism in 1919, thirteen were on the roster of the St. Louis German Conference. Three served as editors and assis tant editors of Haus and Herd, to say nothing of the many who

must remain even uncounted, one a poet of note, who contributed generously to the periodicals of our CHurch. There have been furnished besides to the mother church a number of the sturdiest leaders in administration and pulpit from the eminence of the episcopacy down to the heads of prominent institutions. Nor should a number of outstanding men in the foreign field be overlooked, sent out by this Conference.

A summary review cannot overlook the three institutions which represent no small part of the activity of this Conference. As far back as 1852, twelve years previous to the formation into conferences, these spiritual sons of the Oxford scholar met at Winchester, Ill., and resolved to found a college. The college planned was to offer general educational advantages to its youth and serve to educate its ministerial candidates. Two years later on due reconsideration a German department in the English-German College in Quincy, Ill., made this ambitious dream real. The maintenance of this venture proving impractical the Western Orphan Asylum and Educational Institute was founded in 1864 in Warrenton, Mo. This institution survives as Central Wesleyan College. In 1872, the minutes of the Conference indicate considerable dissatisfaction due to local lack of support of the college in Warrenton, started a movement which terminated in the founding of the German College in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. There the relations maintained to Iowa Wesleyan University (College) made possible

good work with exceptionally small funds. In 1909 the two schools merged their funds and Central Wesleyan College became the sole school of the Conference. During its more than sixty years of history nearly a thousand graduates have gone from its halls. To the ministry and special work of the Church this roster of alumni has furnished 302, for the teaching profession 260, of home makers 185, business 95, etc.. In 1925 this institution took on new life and energy. Counting the attendance of the summer quarter, the highest number of students in Central Wesleyan's history was reached---four hundred. In 1910 this college was admitted to the Missouri College Union, the standardizing agency in the state of Missouri. Our graduates receive teachers' certificates from the State Department of Education without further examination. Our goal is membership in the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This college will be under the jurisdiction of the St. Louis Conference.

The twin institution of the college is the Central Wesleyan Orphan Home, an integral part of the college till 1872, when they were put under independent trustee bodies. Over seven hundred children have been received, cared for, and trained. The number which avails itself of a college education is increasing annually. At present, there are over one hundred children in the home. The institution has never been more flourishing than it is today. Through the merger, it has

become the property of the Missouri and St. Louis Conferences. It is the only orphan home in the entire Kansas City area. Plans of generous expansion are definitely forming in the minds of the administration and the trustees.

Finally, there is the Old People's Home in Quincy, Illinois. Its origin dates back to the fine gift of George Pfeiffer and wife, who gave their splendid property in 1889 to the St. Louis German Conference, as a home for the aged. Since 1890, when the doors of this home opened, and received its first six inmates, two hundred and eighteen have entered. At present fifty-seven inmates and seven boarders are cared for. The Treasurer's Report puts the property valuation and endowment of the institution at $190,000. It will be under the auspices of the Illinois Conference.

The St. Louis German Conference, which was represented by one lone missionary in 1841, and no property assets, save the invaluable and inestimable values wrapped up in a life aglow with the love of Christ and his fellows, this conference comes to the mother church in the year 1925 to report its mission upon which it was sent, fulfilled, and that without apology, to render an account of itself. The account summarizes fifty-eight effective and nineteen retired ministers and four probationers; a church membership of over ten thousand, Sunday School scholars and officers eleven thousand, seven hundred and twenty one, members of the Epworth League two thousand seven

hundred forty-four. This is the human asset as far as membership can show it. On the material side of the budget we place eighty-nine churches and sixty-two parsonages, one college, one orphan home, one old people's home. Tabulated in dollars and cents, we have a Preacher's Aid Fund of $55,000, physical properties and endowment of the college $650,000, Orphan Home $330,000, Old People's Home $190,000, churches and parsonages $1,500,000, a total of $2,725,000. This man power and money power is at the disposal of the church, as it were for reinforcement. None of it is submerged or lost. Not a man among them but will put every ounce of his strength and all of the whole-souled devotion to the cause of the Kingdom of our Lord. That is the status of the St. Louis German Conference.

FIFTY FIVE YEARS OF KINGDOM SERVICE WITHIN THE SOUTHWESTERN AND ST. LOUIS GERMAN CONFERENCES

Wm. Schutz

After having served Webster City Mission in Iowa in the Northwestern German Conference from April to the end of September, I came to St. Charles, Mo., to attend the seventh session of the Southwestern German Conference, which convened there early in October, 1870, and numbered 140 members. The most eloquent preacher on the theme of redemption, perhaps in the world, at that time, Bishop Matthew Simpson, presided.

The memory of his sermon on: "But we preach Christ crucified", will ever linger with me. A member of the English M.E. Church asked brother Ritter, the host of the Conference: "Why do you all not preach like the Bishop?" Brother Ritter replied: "Because we are not all Bishops."

Brother Philip Naumann, a saintly man, was Presiding Elder of the Belleville District. He appointed me to the Bunker Hill and Staunton charge to succeed the faithful E.H. Kriege, father of Dr. Otto Kriege. The labor of the inexperienced preacher was not in vain, thank God. During my pastorate of two years God blessed my service with conversions and accessions. In September, 1872, the genial Bishop Gilbert Haven assigned me to Appleton and Cape Girardeau circuit in

Southeast Missouri. On the way to my new field of service I tarried in Belleville long enough to get married to Miss Mary Mueller, who for 37 years was a model minister's wife. This event occurred on a Tuesday. The next day we started on our wedding trip in a buggy, a distance of 84 miles. We found the parsonage in the backwoods, 2 1/2 miles from Appleton, 28 miles from Cape Girardeau, where I preached and instructed a fine class of children every other Sunday in catechism. At Appleton I taught school in the parsonage six months in the year. Among my pupils was W.C. Schultze, whom I received into the church. At this place we had very encouraging class-meetings and warm prayer meetings.

This section of Missouri at that time was infested with much fever. Hence we were glad after two years to be transferred to a healthier climate---to Red Bud, Illinois, 16 miles distant was Deutsch Huegel, 13 miles in another direction was another appointment called Grant. These three constituted the circuit. At. Deutsch Hill I met a youth of 16 years just arrived from Germany. On my cordial invitation he came to our service. He attended a few months later a basket-meeting near our church and was soundly converted. This youth was George Hildenstein. To meet all my appointments was a task, but never the less a pleasant task for the Lord gave some increase. In 1878 the St. Louis German Conference was organized at Warsaw, Ill. From 1877 to 1880 I served Decatur charge. God blessed

our service here with mighty revivals, especially in my first year. At the end of my pastorate I left enrolled 70 full members, at the beginning there were 35. I served Warrenton Church and Pitts from 1880 to 1882. God blessed us in the Chapel of the College building with many conversions in the protracted meetings. In May 1881 a tornado destroyed a part of the college building. The damage was promptly repaired. This was a very pleasant charge. The association with the professors and their families was congenial indeed.

September 1882, after our Conference session, one of the members, H. Pfaff, was compelled to drop out of the ministerial ranks; hence I was transferred to Belleville to fill the vacancy, and Prof. J.M. Rinkel was put in charge of the congregation in my place for the year. The "Lord who giveth the increase" blessed this church with a sweeping revival and many accessions in Belleville. From 1885 to 1889 I served the large Warren circuit, with a circumference of 75 miles, nearly 400 members residing in Lincoln, Montgomery and Warren counties. I conducted protracted meetings every year with glorious results in all the three churches, which are now served by three pastors. I taught a catechism class every year in each church, examining in public 36 children in one year; visited the members not less than four times annually. Hence only one-third of my time I was enabled to be with my family. At the end of four years my family and I were more than pleased to be

appointed to Warrenton charge again, especially because of the educational facilities there. Again only two years pastorate was allotted to me in the Athens of the Conference. In 1891 Bishop Bowman assigned me to the Quincy District. After six years service on the District, I was appointed to Memorial Church, St. Louis, Mo. For 6 years from 1897 to 1903 I had charge of this very sociable church. The change from the office of a Presiding Elder to the pastorate was much appreciated, since I never enjoyed traveling much. The District was 450miles long. I closed my pastorate at Memorial with a net increase of thirty members and moved to Elmbank Church. The church building with parsonage was half completed. Late in November 1903, it was dedicated by Bishop Fitzgerald and Dr. Wm. Koeneke. A debt of $4000 still remained on the church. During the 7 years of service here this sum was reduced to one thousand dollars. Our labor at Elmbank was blessed in many ways. My greatest sorrow was experienced in this parsonage--- my wife, with an angelic disposition, was separated from me by death in September 1909. A year later I was transferred to Summerfield. I expected this to be my last appointment. However my strength was renewed in the village and rural atmosphere to such an extent during my five years pastorate that I concluded to serve the kingdom five years longer and celebrate my 50th anniversary in the active ministry. Therefore I deemed it wise to enter again the largest state on earth

---the state (estate) of matrimony after having lived alone in a parsonage for five years. June 1915 I was married to Mrs. Louise Jaenicken, another model minister's wife, mother-in-law of my dear daughter, and in September I entered for the second time the pastorate of our church in Bunker Hill, Ill., after 43 years of service elsewhere. Only two of the membership of my former pastorate could greet and welcome us, and these I had received into the church 44 years ago.

In 1920 at San Jose my 50th anniversary in the active service was beautifully remembered. Thank God I am still in the service with my name on the list of the effective members of the St. Louis German Conference. I completed the 55th year of my ministry last April, and am now completing my 10th year service in this church. I am profoundly thankful to the Lord that during all these years only four times ill health prevented me from meeting my appointments and preaching at the designated hour.

I have always considered the vocation of a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be the most exalted on earth and the very greatest privilege. I know and knew it to be my duty to preach to render service for the kingdom. But I felt, I realized it far more to be my high privilege to preach and to work for the Master, although I have experienced my share of hardships, too. The calling of a minister of the Gospel to my mind has many, many more beautiful aspects than dark ones. I

am grateful that my lot has fallen in the Southwestern and St. Louis German Conferences, among such genial, big-hearted, lovable brethren and was so delightfully associated with them more than half a century.

I entertain precious memories of many of the dear brethren who for 50 years and more were my associates in the service of the kingdom and have been transferred from the militant to the triumphant church.

CHAMPION CITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Thomas Sullenger

During the summer of 1894 the world was full of distrust. The people of rural America had just undergone the worst depression in American history up to that time. The "Panic of 1893" had destroyed many farmers and merchants and the people were screaming for help. Wheat dropped to 47 cents per bushel and farm communities were ablaze with fear and despair. At the same time, the nation exploded with labor unrest in the Pullman Railroad Strike in Chicago. With death and brutality in the background, our nation seemed to many to be without hope.

But even in the midst of strife the new community of Champion City was growing. These strong German pioneers had a need not just for better times, but also for spiritual growth. In that summer of 1894, Bernhard Otte began to raise the question of spiritual growth. He did more than talk---he went to Owensville and convinced a young Methodist circuit rider, Rev. Gideon Boellner, to preach one or two sermons a month in Champion City. The coming of a pastor then raised the question of where the settlers would meet to worship. Phillip Landwehr had some connections with the Evangelical Congregation at Dutch Hill, and obtained permission for the Methodists to meet there until such time as the Evangelicals could secure a regular

minister. Rev. Boellner conducted his first service in July of 1894, using as his text Psalm 20:5, "We will rejoice in Thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners; the Lord fulfill all thy petitions."

After their third meeting, the little group faced a new problem. The Dutch Hill Evangelical Church trustees informed Rev. Boellner that they had secured a new minister for their church and, according to their agreement, the Methodists would have to relocate. At the suggestion of William Landwehr the services continued in the homes of the faithful. The next meeting was held at the home of Casper Koelling. Besides a service of worship, an organizational meeting was held. Sixteen people joined together to form the Champion City Methodist Society. These sixteen charter members were Bernhard Otte, Mrs. Caroline Otte, Phillip Landwehr, Mrs. Alesa Landwehr, Heinrich Landwehr, Wilhelm Landwehr, Mrs. Louisa (Grandma) Landwehr, Louise Landwehr, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Spindler, Casper Koelling, Mrs. Margerethe Koelling, Fritz Weirich, Mrs. Louise Weirich, August Bierman, and Sam Otte.

In the next few months the fellowship met in the home of Casper Koelling and Henry Landwehr. In September o 1894, the call went out to the presiding Bishop of the St. Louis Conference for a preacher for the new Society. In the Rev. George Zocher, the congregation received not only a preacher and gospel teacher, but also a skilled carpenter. That fall Rev.

Zocher led the people in breaking the foundation rocks, hauling lumber from the Pinery in Potosi, and beginning the construction of a church. Mr. Henry Landwehr fashioned the cornerstone and by winter the outside work was done. During the winter months the interior was finished, pews were built, the pulpit was completed, and the chancel rail installed. On April 28, 1895, the building was dedicated. Rev. Gideon Boellner from Owensville and Rev. Charles Guenther from Drake came to help Rev. Zocher "christen" the new church. In that spring of 1895, the first revolt against Spain broke out in Cuba, and the news media cried for American involvement in the turmoil. The new congregation responded by taking the name "Friedens Gemeinde" (Peace Congregation). As the American people struggled for a true peace, the peace of God settled on the hill overlooking the Bourbeuse River.

The first confirmation class was confirmed in 1896 by Rev. David Froeschle. They were Louise Landwehr Schaff, Ida Landwehr Brinkman, Emil Koelling, and Katie Landwehr Wolff.

During the year 1907 when the Lusitania, the largest steamship of that day, made her maiden voyage, the "Friedens Gemeinde" congregation set out on a new voyage as well. It was in 1907 that the church was transferred from the Owensville Circuit to the Leslie Circuit, of which it is still a part. Over the years, revivals have been held, repairs made, and the congregation has flourished.

Out of this household of faith have come two members of the ordained clergy, Rev. John Schebaum and Rev. Theodore Wolff. Rev. Schebaum was ordained in the Freewill Baptist Church and called to preach in that ministry in 1967. Rev. Wolff was licensed to preach in 1921 at the age of 16. He graduated cum laude from Central Wesleyan College in 1929, and was received on trial in the St. Louis Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church that same year. He was ordained Deacon by Bishop Ernest Waldorf in 1931, and Elder by Bishop Charles Mead in 1933. Now retired, after a long ministry, he lives in the Champion City area.

The Great Depression descended on the land 1929-1932. In that same time period, under the leadership of Rev. William Ratje, the chancel furniture was rebuilt, the pump organ was replaced by a piano, and the steeple was cut down and rebuilt.

In 1943, as the nation adjusted to canned food rations, gas rations, and shoe rations, the women of the church came together at the home of Mrs. Herman Kampschroeder for a quilting. It was there, under the leadership of Rev. G.A. Prietz that the Ladies' Aid Society was organized. The records indicate that there were twenty charter members, of whom five are still living. Through the years this society has sponsored the annual picnic and created dozens of quilts to raise funds for their work.

In 1945 the world moved, for better or worse, into the

Nuclear Age. "Friedens Gemeinde" celebrated their Golden Anniversary on April 29th. Mrs. Katie Landwehr Wolff wrote the history for that event.

REA brought light, new hymnals were purchased, and the parking lot was improved in the years following World War II. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bromelsick and sons donated, in 1955, a strip of land forty feet wide and the length of the north side of the church property. This provided a new drive to the north side of the grounds. Rev. D.F. Finely headed the writing of the 60th anniversary history in 1955.

Some modernization took place in the late 1950s when wood heat was replaced by a new gas furnace.

In 1970, as the war in southeast Asia raged, "Friedens Gemeinde" set on its quiet hill, a bastion of God's peace. For 75 years the church had stood the test of time and continued to be a beacon of gospel freedom. The church's Diamond Jubilee was observed on May 31, 1970, with a day of worship and remembrance. God's Word was presented to the people three times that day from the pulpit. At 10 am, Richard Copeland, a former pastor, brought the message, "Our Past---Our Heritage". At 11, Dr. Berlyn Farris, District Superintendent, presented the message "Our Present---Our Hold", and after a huge basket dinner Rev. George Heslar, conference historian and former pastor of First United Methodist Church in Rolla presented the message "Our Future---Our Hope---Our Resolve for our Future".

The day closed with the Covenant Service of John Wesley.

In the next several years, as the Vietnam war ground to a close, the church's mission continued. In May, 1973, the building of a new picnic stand began under the direction of Orville Braun. With volunteer labor from the church, the new stand was completed in April, 1975, at an expense of $2,646.90.

About the same time action began, under the direction of Edwin Idel, to start a perpetual care program for the Champion City cemetery. On Monday, May 7, 1973, actions were taken to form the "Champion City Cemetery Association". With good response from those who were concerned a Certificate of Incorporation was granted on August 22, 1973.

As America faced the resignation of Richard Nixon in 1975, Rev. Theodore Wolff was writing the history of the church. It was with the aid of his manuscript and that of his mother (Mrs. Katie Wolff) written in 1945, and the verbal history of Mrs. Regina Koelling that this 90th year history is written.

As long as the spirit of God has a ministry in the community, the church cannot die, but when the spirit of God dies in the church, that church cannot survive. It is up to the faithful to keep the spirit of God alive within us. If this is done, there is no fear that the true church will still be alive in Champion City long past the 21st century.

LETTERS FROM THE MISSION FIELD

William Johnson

William Johnson was one of two brothers appointed to serve the Indian tribes in Kansas, by the Missouri Conference in 1830. His field of service was the Kansas (Kaw) Mission. The work of the Johnsons, and others, was so successful that an Indian Mission District was established in 1832, and the Indian Mission Conference in 1844. For this issue of Toward the Setting Sun, we have chosen to include William Johnson's letters to the "Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church". In future issues, we will include letters from Thomas Johnson and Jerome C. Berryman as well.

Kanzas Indian Agency, June 26th, 1831

Reverend Sir---

As I was appointed at the last session of the Missouri Conference to make an effort to introduce learning and religion among the Kanzas Indians, it becomes my duty to make some communication to you, by which all who desire information respecting this new field of labour may know what is doing here for the advancement of our Redeemer's Kingdom.

When I received this appointment, I was and had been for

some time in bad health. I was able to commence the discharge of my duties on the 1st of December, 1830, and on the 19th, I opened a school in a room which the agent invited me to occupy; but for three months the weather was so extremely cold that I did but little, there being but few children in a situation to attend school. At the close of the winter we prepared a school house, which I now occupy with a small school. We have preaching every Sabbath, but there are few who understand the English language well enough to be profited by hearing. As to preaching to the Indians at large, I am not at the present able to do much, having so suitable interpreter; this circumstance has led me to apply all my convenient time to study of their language. I have formed a vocabulary of about 500 words, and now think 600 or 800 more will enable me to speak with some fluency.

As to my school, it is composed of about ten Indians and six or seven white children. The Indian children learn well. I have five who spell in words of two syllables, and one who reads and writes very well.

.....

This is a large and needy field of labor. There are about 1,500 souls in the Kanzas tribe; and in addition to these there are large neighboring tribes which speak the same language---making in all about 7,000 who cry aloud for our assistance. I say the call is loud; for I view them on the

threshold of destruction. I need not attempt to describe my feelings while viewing such scenes of human degradation and misery. Suffice it is to say, that I have ardent desire to do what I can by the help of my Master to rescue my unfortunate fellow creatures from present wretchedness and impending ruin.

Could some zealous young men in other places less needy than our western forests behold for a moment the pressing wants of these children of the forest, methinks they would leave all, gladly follow Christ and bear the tidings of Salvation to the most needy people that tread American soil. Yes, how could they refuse to give a few years to that Savior, who has given himself for them.

Can it be possible that the Macedonian cry will never reach the ears and hearts of some, who can come with ease and labour in this interesting field?

How can a man get down on his knees and say, "Thy kingdom come", unless he act his part to hasten its establishment?

Then let those who can engage in this work and those who by giving a little out of their abundance with which the Lord has blessed them, assist in the instruction of these poor dependent children of the forest.

William Johnson

Chauton, Mo., August 30th, 1831

Reverend Brother---

The year of my labor having come to an end among the Kansas Indians, I will now report to you the success we have had this year. I have little to say, but yet, what I do say proceeds out of a glad heart; for the news is joyful. I informed you in my last communication that some friends were inquiring of Him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write. I can now tell you that some have found Jesus precious to their souls, and have united themselves in society with us. Those who have turned to the Lord are of the worthy family in which I live, Colonel Boone's. (Ed. Note: Daniel Morgan Boone was the son of Daniel Boone, and was the Government Farmer among the Kansas Indians. It was at his suggestion that the Indian Mission was first launched.)

We have no converts among the Indians yet; though, I have thought some were under religious impressions.

My little school continued to prosper while in operation, and I am sorry I could not keep it in operation during my absence. But this was impossible as I have had no one to aid me in teaching. I still believe, that I shall soon be able, by perseverance, to preach Jesus to this hapless people.

Our progress has been small this year; but our expenditures have been equally small. I have used very little of the money appropriated for the work.

I will close in saying, that I intend to go on in the strength of the Lord of hosts. I feel no unwillingness to spend my life in this missionary cause.

Since I left the Kanzas Mission, I have attended several camp meetings. I rejoice to see the work of the Lord prosper in almost every direction. The prospect of a great revival is brighter than I have ever seen it in Missouri. We have not only witnessed the shouts of heaven born souls at our camp meetings, but at prayer meetings.

May the Lord carry on the work over opposition, until great victory shall be achieved in these western wilds.

William Johnson

Dear Brother---

According to the instructions of the superintendent of this mission, I proceed to report the state of things at this point of missionary labor. You are aware that this is a new field, selected at our last annual conference, as one of importance. We could not make any beginning to improve until March. Since then we have been trying to hasten our business as fast as possible. We have now twenty acres of good soil, fenced and planted; two cabins built, and a garden nearly finished. We removed into our cabins about two weeks since.

The Indians have cleaned their little fields, and gone

out to hunt for buffalo, expecting to return in five or six weeks. There are only seven or eight families left, and they are mostly old, lame, or sick. Several of the sick have camped by us, for the purpose of taking medicine, and such help as we can give.

We are preparing to instruct these people as fast as we can, but shall not be able to do much before winter, as we have our dwelling house to build---also to depend upon our new farm for provision, as we are one hundred miles from the nearest white settlement. These Indians have some corn, and but little of anything else, either food or clothing. They are emphatically poor and exceedingly ignorant.

The Kanzas Indians have no cattle or hogs, and few horses compared to the number of persons; there being about seventeen hundred of them. The efforts of the benevolent agent will doubtless prove beneficial to them. He is at this time having about three hundred acres of land fenced and planted for them.

I wish it were my privilege to say that some religious impressions were made upon the minds of these children of nature. We have no one to interpret anything on the subject of religion, and my own knowledge of their language is yet insufficient for these things; though I am learning every day, and hope ere long to be able to preach to them a crucified Jesus.

In the mist of all we see to discourage us, among a people far sunk in superstition and darkness, we have some

things to encourage us to persevere. They seem willing to learn. They are fond of talking, and do not try to conceal their views on any subject. They are more serious and devoted than many other tribes, and better informed. They fast and pray and attend to many ceremonies, in a solemn manner; yet in all their worship there is no confession of sin or knowledge of a Savior. If they only knew Jesus, in the regeneration of their souls, and would worship in His name with the same promptness that they attend to their own ceremonies, they would doubtless be a happy people.

I will (not) close this report without begging an interest in the prayers of Christians in behalf of this poor tribe of human beings. Yours in love,

W. Johnson

Rev. and Dear Sir----

This mission has been two years in operation, though on a very small scale, in no way adequate to the wants of the people for whom it was established.

The Kanzas Indians are located on the Kanzas River, about eighty miles above its junction with the Missouri. They number two thousand souls, and have ever maintained the greatest friendship with the American people.

They were once a large and more wealthy people; but from

sickness and the destruction of the wild game, they have been reduced in number, and sank into the most degrading poverty imaginable. Wile in poverty and wretchedness, they carry on a perpetual war with the Pawnees, their next neighbors west; and hence dexterity in war is the only certain road to honor, according to their teachings of the wise men of the nation.... This being the state of things and there being no interpreter in the nation, very little has been done in the way of preaching. But we are not left without encouragement. In all the instruction we can give, understandingly, we are prepared to say, "our labor is not in vain in the Lord."

A great change has taken place in the minds and actions of most of the nation in reference to labor. The men begin to work with the women. They are building houses out in the woods, and are preparing fences, raising stock, and preparing to live like the white men---as they call it. We do not say so much about the amount of labor, as the great change in sentiment, although quite a number have proven by experience that they profit most by civilized habits. And now we find more trying to build than we can find time to teach.

We have promised ourselves, that this winter and spring would be a favorable time for imparting religious instruction; but every day seems to bring its trials. During the fall hunt, the first chief of the nation and four braves died. Though some of these died of fever, and others of whiskey, yet such is

their savage sentiments, that they must shed blood or commit depredations upon some other tribe, as a satisfaction for the loss which the GReat Spirit has caused them to sustain. To gratify this savage spirit nearly all the male in the nation, who can bear arms, will march in a few days against the Pawnees. We are able to prevent a few only, and a few others are unable to walk.

Four separate parties will go out, each seeking satisfaction for the respective friend or relative. In this state of darkness and wretchedness we are thankful for a few who will profit by instruction. While we have some disposed to hear us try to tell of the true God, and of a merciful saviour, we have six living in our family, whom we wish to educate. They promise well, as far as we can form an opinion.

In conclusion, I want to state a simple fact, and then leave the condition of this people with the church and with God. This people must be rescued from their wretchedness or sunk forever, and no church has undertaken for them but the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The government is doing nothing for them but furnishing a farmer and smithery. If it devolves upon us to deliver them from destruction, it is our duty to make a strong effort to break down their prejudice and superstition, which will, if unrestrained, prove their ruin. We ask an interest in the prayers of God's people of this nation. Yours in love,

Wm. Johnson

Dear Brother----

....The latter part of the summer and beginning of the fall were very sickly here, both at the mission and among the Indians generally. At one time, of the two white families at this place, viz., my own and the government farmer's, numbering in all fourteen, only myself and a young lady who lives with us here were able to go about. Several cases of fever, and other diseases, continued to resist every effort we were able to make. A physician was then sent for, but being about ninety miles out of the United States, it took four days and nights to obtain a physician, at which time it was too late to do anything in one of the cases, and the unfortunate sufferer, Mrs. Bensley, died the next night, leaving a husband and five little children, all sick. In the midst of this affliction and sorrow one reflection consoled us; she died in peace, professing resignation to the will of God. For about three weeks after this Mrs. Johnson and our two little children lay very sick. We were uneasy for every one of them. In another room lay Mr. Greene and his wife, and none to administer to them but two of us, and neither of us well, with ten sick, and two of us to do all that was done. We had no time to rest day or night. We were next called to part with our dear little daughter, Mary Frances. We had now to bear trials new to us. We know we loved our little children, but never knew how tender the ties of affection were before. But the breach was made in

our little family, and we committed her to the grave, praying God to give us grace to bear it.

While we were sick at the mission, the Indians were suffering equally as much. In some families as many as five died. But few families escaped disease; and the number of deaths was great in proportion to the number sick. The awful cries of the Indians sounded in our ears nearly every day. The lack of wholesome diet and suitable medicines doubtless increased the number of deaths greatly. The Indians were gloomy, and not inclined to do anything but prepare for their fall hunt; believing that they would be better off if scattered in the woods, where fresh meat could be obtained. In this condition they scattered, and have not yet returned, but will be at their homes in a few weeks. The last two summers have been sickly here, though we have always considered the country very healthy

During the absence of the Indians we kept up regular preaching every Sabbath for those few who attend, in English. But we expect to spend the greater part of our time with the Indians when they come home, in trying to teach them religion, and to encourage them in working and preparing to live more comfortable at home.

We feel humbled in hart, and deeply sorry that we cannot report convictions and conversions among these poor people. But they are yet left in darkness and superstition, and know

but little of the blessed religion of the Bible, so well calculated to elevate and save poor degraded Indians. Yours in love

Wm. Johnson

In 1842, William Johnson died. He had been a missionary to the Indians for eleven years, the last seven among the Kanzas. At the time of his death, he was the only missionary who had learned an Indian language well enough to preach in it. He spoke Shawnee, and was fluent in Kanzas. With his death, there were no Kanzas-speaking missionaries, and so the work was set back until another could learn to speak with the Indians in their own language.